

LETTER DATED 4 FEBRUARY 2002 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF JAPAN TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE TRANSMITTING THE TEXT OF A SUMMARY OF THE "TOKYO FOLLOW-UP MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE ILLICIT TRADE IN SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS" HELD IN TOKYO FROM 23 TO 25 JANUARY 2002*

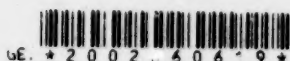
I have the honour to forward to you a summary of the "Tokyo Follow-up Meeting UN Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects" in Tokyo from 23rd to 25th January 2002.

I would be grateful if you could issue this text as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament, and distribute to all member and non-member States participating in the Conference.

(Signed:)

Seiichiro NOBORU
Ambassador
Delegation of Japan to the
Conference on Disarmament

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Chairperson's summary of the Tokyo Follow-up Meeting of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects

The Tokyo Follow-up Meeting of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects was held from 23 to 25 January 2002 at the invitation of the Government of Japan. Forty-seven representatives from 32 Governments as well as 32 individuals representing various organizations and research institutes participated. (A list of participants is contained in appendix II.)

The objective of the Follow-up Meeting was to sustain the momentum of the United Nations Conference and to give the participants a first-hand opportunity to assess the outcome of the Conference and to consider ways to vigorously implement the Programme of Action adopted by the Conference.

The participants in the Meeting considered that the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 that took place between the United Nations Conference and the Tokyo Follow-up Meeting had the effect of making the issues of small arms and light weapons even more relevant, since the problems of terrorism, drug trafficking, organized crime, regional conflicts and the weapons used in such conflicts are closely linked and the international community must make greater efforts to deal with such new challenges.

The Meeting proved to be very timely and useful, and achieved its objectives. Most of the participants reiterated the need to sustain momentum of the Conference and to take active initiatives at all levels to implement the Programme of Action. All the keynote presentations were valuable and enlightening, and the exchanges of views that followed were stimulating and productive. The outline of the Meeting and some of the many salient points raised and discussed during the sessions are summarized below. Mr. M. Donowaki, special assistant to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, served as the chairperson of most of the sessions.

At the opening session, a message from Mr. Junichiro Koizumi, Prime Minister of Japan, was introduced; subsequently, the Meeting was addressed by Mr. Seiken Sugiura, Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Mr. Camilo Reyes, President of the Conference and Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations Office at Geneva, and Mr. Carlos dos Santos, Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Mozambique to the United Nations.

In session I, under the theme "Assessment of the United Nations Conference", keynote presentations were made by Chairperson Mitsuro Donowaki, Special Assistant to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Camilo Reyes Rodriguez, President of the United Nations Conference, João Honwana, Secretary of the United Nations Conference and Chief of the Conventional Branch of the United Nations

Department for Disarmament Affairs, and Keith Krause, Programme Director of the Small Arms Survey, Geneva, followed by a general exchange of views.

In the discussion there was broad agreement on the value of the United Nations Conference and the Programme of Action as a legitimization of the various activities related to the issue of small arms and light weapons and the recognition of its importance. Although some participants thought that the Programme of Action did not go far enough, all agreed that it was a valuable first step. Moreover, there was broad agreement that the Programme of Action was a common basis from which different States and regions could move forward at a speed appropriate to their desires, needs and capacities. The Programme of Action empowers States and regions to decide what aspects of the issue to prioritize.

In session 2, under the theme "Exchange of views on the Programme of Action adopted at the United Nations Conference" keynote presentations were made by Ana Maria Sampaio of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, Denis Chouinard of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of Canada, Fu Chong of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China, C. Edward Peartree, Senior Policy Expert on Small Arms, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Department of State of the United States of America; Antonio Cosano Perez, Ambassador-at-Large for International Security Affairs of Spain, on behalf of the European Union; and Ambassador Pasi Patokallio of Finland, followed by a general exchange of views. The participants endorsed the approach of Mr. Reyes in highlighting a range of measures that could — and should — be taken immediately by States without requiring legislative procedures, for example, establishing national points of contact and designating national coordinating agencies for the implementation of the Programme of Action, and starting record keeping on small arms and light weapons. The United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs is also empowered to collect and circulate such data and information provided by States. It was also noted that some measures were more relevant than others to particular regions — for example, in relation to the concerns of South-East Asia about transnational organized crime — and that this would determine implementation priorities.

During the discussion there was a very encouraging exchange of information, giving an early indication of the initiatives which were being undertaken, both regionally and nationally, to implement and advance the Programme of Action. Participants agreed that there were a large number of such initiatives under way, particularly in Latin America and Africa, and that this was a positive aid to speedy implementation of national measures.

In session 3, under the theme "Exports to non-State actors", keynote presentations were made by Ambassador dos Santos, C. Edward Peartree of the United States Department of State and Peggy Mason of Canada, followed by an interesting and informative discussion of the issue. This was a topic on which the positions of participating States at the United Nations Conference had been sharply divided.

Although these divisions remained, the discussion was constructive and several potential avenues for future work to bridge the divides were suggested. For example, Ambassador dos Santos highlighted the fact that effective implementation of the Programme of Action, particularly of its section II, paragraph 11, would make it much more difficult for non-State actors to obtain small arms and light weapons. Some participants suggested that the issue might be resolved through the efforts for

a clearer formulation of the export criteria of the Programme of Action in the follow-up process, while others thought that its recognition as a matter of principle might still be needed. Mr. Peartree agreed with other participants that disagreements on the issue should not be allowed to interfere with the implementation of the Programme of Action, which was the key priority, but he stated United States concerns about the failure to consider exceptional circumstances under which arms supplies to non-State actors would be necessary. He also noted that the United States favoured an alternative conceptualization, differentiating between responsible and irresponsible end-users. Ms. Mason suggested that a fruitful route for resolving the issue would be to look at international law and how it could be used to support a constructive interpretation of section II, paragraph 11. The establishment of a group of governmental experts for that purpose might be a way forward. The session proved to be the start of a constructive dialogue and it was agreed that the dialogue should be continued at future similar meetings.

In session 4, under the theme "International assistance and cooperation", keynote presentations were made by Yoshihumi Okamura, Director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Division, Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (who also chaired the session); Owen Greene of the University of Bradford, United Kingdom; Samuel Hinga Norman, Deputy Minister of Defence of Sierra Leone; El Ghassim Wane, Acting Deputy Head of the Organization of African Unity Conflict Management Centre; Takuto Kubo of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo; and Sukehiro Hasegawa, Director of the Tokyo office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), followed by a general exchange of views.

The session acknowledged the path-breaking initiative by the Government of Japan to implement an "action-oriented disarmament initiative". In the general discussion it was pointed out that some of the most affected and least developed countries lacked not only the capacity to implement the Programme of Action, but also sufficient knowledge about it. There was a discussion of the problems of small arms and light weapons in countries such as Cambodia in South-East Asia, Sierra Leone in Africa, and Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in Europe. There was agreement as to the key role of development in providing incentives for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and recognition that the order in which those activities were undertaken might vary in order to meet local needs and conditions, for example, in Afghanistan. A key requirement was to make weapons less relevant to the local community, and this might require: providing security on the ground, security sector reform and providing people with a livelihood.

The session also included specific consideration of the needs of Afghanistan in the aftermath of the conflict there and the potential problem of the small arms and light weapons left in the region. The relationship between development and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration is relevant to the process beginning to get under way in Afghanistan, where priorities include: assisting the Interim Administration/Government in assessing the problem of small arms and light weapons; developing a strategy, policy and realistic action plan for small arms reduction in Afghanistan; creating opportunities for legal and sustainable livelihoods to reduce the demand for arms; collection and disposal of small arms and light weapons made redundant by peace-building and security sector reform processes; developing community approaches and awareness of small arms and light weapons

collection processes; building capacity to control illicit flows of small arms and light weapons through strengthening of border controls and regional cooperation; carrying out public awareness campaigns through visible destruction of initially collected small arms and light weapons to build public confidence; empowering civil society organizations to address the problem of small arms and light weapons and violence at the community level; strengthening border controls and regional cooperation in curtailing illicit flows of small arms and light weapons. UNDP expressed its readiness to work closely with the countries concerned on these priorities. In the discussion, concerns were expressed that the resources being channelled to Afghanistan might mean that less money would be made available elsewhere. However, as one participant noted, it was not always money that was required; shared expertise could be of equal value and that was a resource that even poor countries could share. South-South cooperation, particularly in terms of human resources, was very valuable.

In session 5, under the theme "Cooperation between governmental and non-governmental sectors", keynote presentations were made by Nobuhiko Suto of Interband, Paul Eavis of Saferworld, Eugenia Piza-Lopez of International Alert, Kentaro Genma, Project Adviser, Japanese Government Research on Small Arms Issues in Cambodia, and Virginia Gamba of Safer Africa, followed by a general exchange of views. The session produced very rich accounts of activities being undertaken between civil society, Governments and regional organizations in a number of regions and States. Important ideas were introduced, such as a "safety net" approach to dealing with ex-combatants and their families in carrying out disarmament, demobilization and reintegration projects. It was suggested that civil society could effectively assist Governments in promoting solutions to small arms and light weapons issues in a number of ways: policy formulation, action-oriented research, implementation and monitoring. Concerns were expressed that in some countries and regions scepticism remained on the part of Governments with regard to the role of NGOs and civil society. It was also noted that in some cases there needed to be greater coordination between NGO groups and increased accountability and transparency of both NGOs and Governments.
